

UNCLASSIFIED

E38

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CARACA 02721 01 OF 02 112139Z  
ACTION ARA-01

RELEASED IN PART  
B6, B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-15 AMAD-01 CIAE-00 C-01 DODE-00 HA-09  
H-01 INRE-00 INR-01 L-03 ADS-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00  
OMB-01 PA-01 PM-01 PRS-01 P-01 SNP-01 SP-01  
SS-01 TRSE-00 T-01 USIE-00 /041W  
-----196C25 112139Z /38

P 112137Z MAR 92  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9035  
INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 02721

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, VE  
SUBJECT: GOV. VELASQUEZ: CAP HAS LOST CREDIBILITY

REF: CARACAS 2302

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: CAUSA R LEADER ANDRES VELASQUEZ TOLD THE  
AMBASSADOR THAT NEITHER THE MARCH 5 SPEECH BY PRESIDENT  
PEREZ NOR THE NAMING OF A NEW CABINET COULD RESTORE  
CAP'S CREDIBILITY. THE AMBASSADOR ARGUED STRONGLY THAT  
REPEATED CALLS FOR CAP'S RESIGNATION COULD ENCOURAGE  
MILITARY INTERVENTION IN VENEZUELA. END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CARACA 02721 01 OF 02 112139Z

3. ON MARCH 10 GOVERNOR ANDRES VELASQUEZ, LEADER OF THE  
LEFTIST CAUSA R PARTY, CALLED ON THE AMBASSADOR TO  
EXPRESS HIS THANKS FOR LAST YEAR'S IVP TRIP TO THE U.S.  
AND TO TALK ABOUT VENEZUELA'S POLITICAL CRISIS. LABATT  
AND TWO AIDES TO THE GOVERNOR SAT IN.

4. CAP'S CREDIBILITY

-----  
VELASQUEZ SAID HE WAS "WORRIED" ABOUT THE CURRENT

UNCLASSIFIED

SITUATION. HE CLAIMED THAT VENEZUELAN BELIEVE CAP "EMBODIES" MOST OF THE FAULTS OF THE SYSTEM AND IS INCAPABLE OF REFORMING IT. PRESIDENT PEREZ (CAP), HE SAID, HAS LOST "ALMOST ALL, AT LEAST NINETY PERCENT OF HIS ABILITY TO LEAD, HIS CREDIBILITY." IMMEDIATELY AFTER CAP'S MARCH 5 SPEECH, CAUSA R RAN TWO INFORMAL CHECKS ON PUBLIC OPINION. ACCORDING TO VELASQUEZ, IT CALLED 100 NUMBERS AT RANDOM FROM A PHONE BOOK, AND 85 RESPONDENTS SAID THAT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THE PROMISES MADE BY THE PRESIDENT. IT ALSO ASKED THE DRIVERS OF SMALL BUSES TO FIND OUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK ABOUT THE SPEECH, AND AGAIN THE RESULTS CAME BACK VERY NEGATIVE.

#### 5. GUANABANA GOVERNMENT

-----

THE MEETING WITH VELASQUEZ TOOK PLACE JUST BEFORE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOV CABINET CHANGES, BUT AFTER COPEI (THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY) DECIDED TO LET SOME OF ITS MEMBERS ACCEPT MINISTERIAL POSTS. VELASQUEZ COMMENTED

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CARACA 02721 01 OF 02 112139Z  
THAT COPEI'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CABINET WOULD NOT IMPRESS VENEZUELAN, WHO HAD EXPERIENCED "GUANABANA" GOVERNMENT IN THE PAST. (THE GUANABANA FRUIT IS GREEN ON THE OUTSIDE AND WHITE INSIDE. COPEI USES THE COLOR GREEN AS ITS SYMBOL; ACCION DEMOCRATICA USES WHITE.) THE NEW CABINET WOULD NOT HELP CAP, HE SAID, AND IT MIGHT HURT HIM.

#### 6. CHAVEZ' POPULARITY

-----

WHEN ASKED WHY CHAVEZ BECAME SO POPULAR IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE FAILED COUP, VELASQUEZ SAID CHAVEZ BECAME A SYMBOL OF RESISTANCE TO CORRUPTION, THE PARTY SYSTEM, AND THE ECONOMIC REFORM PROGRAM. THE PEOPLE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IN DEMOCRACY, HE SAID, BUT DO NOT THINK THAT THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IS DEMOCRATIC ENOUGH. THE GOVERNOR ADDED THAT CAUSA R IS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO COUPS.

#### 7. MAINTAINING DEMOCRACY

-----

VELASQUEZ REPEATED HIS THESIS (REFTEL) THAT THE BEST WAY TO GUARANTEE DEMOCRACY IS TO HOLD A REFERENDUM ON CAP'S

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 CARACA 02721 01 OF 02 112139Z  
TO "PROTECT" SOCIETY AGAINST THE VERY WEAKNESS CAUSED BY  
THE MILITARY. VELASQUEZ SHOULD CONSIDER WHETHER  
DEMOCRACY WOULD NOT BE BETTER SERVED BY ALLOWING CAP TO  
COMPLETE HIS TERM, RATHER THAN "LEGALLY" PUSHING HIM OUT  
OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NNNN

PAGE 01 CARACA 02721 02 OF 02 112140Z  
ACTION ARA-01

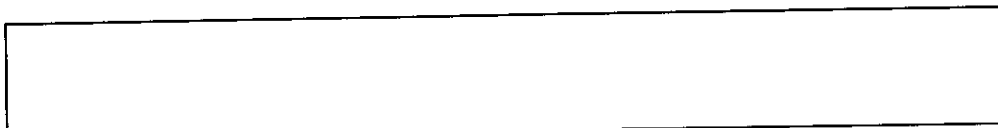
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

P 112137Z MAR 92  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9036  
INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CARACAS 02721

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, VE  
SUBJECT: GOV. VELASQUEZ: CAP HAS LOST CREDIBILITY



B1, B6

SKOL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNN

UNCLASSIFIED